

ESTABLISHED 1877—NEW SERIES.

WASHINGTON, D. C., THURSDAY, JULY 23, 1896.

VOL. XV—NO. 41—WHOLE NO. 780.



## MEMOIRS of General William T. Sherman.

WRITTEN BY HIMSELF

THE PANIC OF 1857

TEMPORARY RETURN TO CALIFORNIA

BECOMES A LAWYER IN KANSAS

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## CHAPTER VI.

CALIFORNIA, NEW YORK AND KANSAS.  
1857-1859.

HAVING CLOSED the bank at San Francisco on the 1st day of May, 1857, accompanied by my family I embarked in the steamer Sonora for Panama, crossed the isthmus and sailed to New York, whence we proceeded to Lancaster, O., where Mrs. Sherman and the family stopped, and I went on to St. Louis. I found there that some changes had been made in the parent-house, that Mr. Lucas had bought out his partner, Capt. Synnott, and that the firm's name had been changed to that of James H. Lucas & Co.

It had also been arranged that an office or branch was to be established in New York City, of which I was to have charge, on pretty much the same terms and conditions as in the previous San Francisco firm.

Mr. Lucas, Maj. Turner and I agreed to meet in New York soon after the 4th of July. We met accordingly at the Metropolitan Hotel, selected an office, No. 12 Wall street, purchased the necessary furniture, and engaged a teller, book-keeper and porter. The new firm was to bear the same title of Lucas, Turner & Co., with about the same partners in interest, but the nature of the business was totally different. We opened our office on the 21st of July, 1857, and at once began to receive accounts from the West and from California, but our chief business was as the resident agents of the St. Louis firm of James H. Lucas & Co. Personally, I took rooms at No. 100 Prince street, in which house were also quartered Maj. J. G. Barnard, and Lieut. J. R. McPherson, United States Engineers, both of whom afterward attained great fame in the civil war.

My business relations in New York were with the Metropolitan Bank and Bank of America; and with the very wealthy and most respectable firm of Schuchardt & Gebhardt, of Nassau street. Everything went along swimmingly till the 21st of August, when all Wall street was thrown into a spasmodic panic, and the panic so resembled that in San Francisco that, having nothing seemingly at stake, I felt amused. But it soon became a serious matter, even to me. Western stocks and securities tumbled to such a figure that all Western banks that held such securities, and had procured advances thereon, were compelled to pay up or substitute increased collaterals. Our own house was not a borrower in New York at all, but many of our Western correspondents were, and it taxed my time to watch their interests. In September the panic extended so as to threaten the safety of even some of the New York banks not connected with the West; and the alarm became general, and at last universal.

In the very midst of this panic came the news that the steamer Central America, formerly the George Law, with 600 passengers and about sixteen hundred thousand dollars of treasure, coming from Aspinwall,

## HAD FOUNDERED AT SEA

off the coast of Georgia, and that about 60 of the passengers had been providentially picked up by a Swedish bark and brought into Savannah. The absolute loss of this treasure went to swell the confusion and panic of the day.

A few days after I was standing in the vestibule of the Metropolitan Hotel, and heard the Captain of the Swedish bark tell his singular story of the rescue of these passengers. He was a short, sailor-like looking man, with a strong German or Swedish accent. He said

that he was sailing from some port in Honduras for Sweden, running down the Gulf Stream off Savannah. The weather had been heavy for some days, and, about midnight, as he paced his deck, he observed a man-of-war hawk circle about his vessel, gradually lowering, until the bird was, as it were, aiming at him. He jerked out a belaying-pin, struck at the bird, missed it, when the hawk again rose high in the air, and a second time began to descend, contract his circle, and make at him again. The second time he hit the bird, and struck it to the deck. This strange fact made him uneasy, and he thought it betokened danger; he went to the binnacle, saw the course he was steering, and without any particular reason he ordered the steersman to alter the course one point to the east.

After this it became quite dark, and he continued to promenade the deck, and had settled into a drowsy state, when as in a dream he thought he heard voices all around his ship. Waking up, he ran to the side of the ship, saw something struggling in the water, and heard clearly cries for help. Instantly leaving his ship to, and lowering all his boats, he managed to pick up 60 or more persons who were floating about on sky-lights, doors, spars, and whatever fragments remained of the Central America. Had he not changed the course of his vessel by reason of the mysterious conduct of that man-of-war hawk, not a soul would probably have survived the night. It was stated by the rescued passengers, among whom was Billy Birch, that the Central America had sailed from Aspinwall with the passengers and freight which left San Francisco on the 1st of September, and encountered the gale in the Gulf Stream somewhere off Savannah, in which she sprung a leak, filled rapidly, and went down. The passengers who were saved had clung to doors, skylights, and such floating objects as they could reach, and were thus rescued; all the rest, some 500 in number, had gone down with the ship.

THE PANIC GREW WORSE AND WORSE, and about the end of September there was a general suspension of the banks of New York, and a money crisis extended all over the country. In New York Lucas, Turner & Co. had nothing at risk. We had large cash balances in the Metropolitan Bank and in the Bank of America, all safe, and we held, for



the account of the St. Louis house at least \$200,000 of St. Louis City and County bonds, and of acceptances falling due right along, none extending beyond 90 days. I was advised from St. Louis that money matters were extremely tight, but I did not dream of any danger in that quarter. I knew well that Mr. Lucas was worth two or three millions in the best real estate, and inferred from the large balances to their credit with me that no mere panic could shake his credit; but early on the morning of Oct. 7 my cousin, James M. Hoyt, came to me in bed, and read me a paragraph in the morning paper to the effect that James H. Lucas & Co. of St. Louis, had suspended. I was, of course, surprised, but not sorry; for I had always contended that a man of so much visible wealth as Mr. Lucas should not be engaged in a business subject to such vicis-

situdes. I hurried down to the office, where I received the same information officially, by telegraph, with instructions to make proper disposition of the affairs of the bank, and to come out to St. Louis, with such assets as would be available there. I transferred the funds belonging to all our correspondents, with lists of outstanding checks, to one or other of our bankers, and with the cash balance of the St. Louis house and their available assets started for St. Louis. I may say with confidence that no man lost a cent by either of the banking-firms of Lucas, Turner & Co., of San Francisco or New York; but, as usual, those who owed us were not always as just.

I reached St. Louis Oct. 17, and found the partners engaged in liquidating the balances due depositors as fast as collections could be forced; and, as the panic began to subside, this process became quite rapid, and Mr. Lucas, by making a loan in Philadelphia, was enabled to close out all accounts without having made any serious sacrifices. Of course, no person ever lost a cent by him. He has recently died, leaving an estate of \$8,000,000. During his lifetime, I had opportunities to know him well, and take much pleasure in bearing testimony to his great worth and personal kindness. On the failure of his bank he assumed personally all the liabilities, released his partners of all responsibility, and offered to assist me to engage in business, which he supposed was due to me because I had resigned my Army commission.

## BACK TO CALIFORNIA.

I remained in St. Louis till the 7th of December, 1857, assisting in collecting for the bank and in controlling all matters which came from the New York and San Francisco branches. B. R. Nisbet was still in San Francisco, but had married a Miss Thornton, and was coming home. There still remained in California a good deal of real estate and notes, valued at about \$200,000 in the aggregate; so that, at Mr. Lucas's request, I agreed to go out again to bring matters, if possible, nearer a final settlement. I accordingly left St. Louis, reached Lancaster, where my family was, on the 10th, staid there till after Christmas, and then went to New York, where I remained till Jan. 5, when I embarked on the steamer Moses Taylor (Capt. McGowan) for Aspinwall; caught the Golden Gate (Capt. Whiting) at Panama, Jan. 15, 1858, and reached San Francisco on the 28th of January. I found that Nisbet and wife had gone to St. Louis, and that we had passed each other at sea. He had carried the ledger and books to St. Louis, but left a schedule, notes, etc., in the hands of S. M. Bowman, esq., who passed them over to me.

On the 30th of January I published a notice of the dissolution of the partnership, and called on all who were still indebted to the firm of Lucas, Turner & Co. to pay up, or the notes would be sold at auction. I also advertised that all the real property was for sale.

Business had somewhat changed since 1857. Parrott & Co.; Garrison, Fritz & Ralston; Wells, Fargo & Co.; Drexel, Sather & Church, and Tallant & Wilde, were the principal bankers. Property continued almost unsalable, and prices were less than a half of what they had been in 1853-54. William Blanding, esq., had rented my house on Harrison street; so I occupied a room in the bank, No. 11, and boarded at the Meigs House, corner of Broadway and Montgomery, which we owned. Having reduced expenses to a minimum, I proceeded, with all possible dispatch, to collect outstanding debts, in some instances making sacrifices and compromises. I made some few sales, and generally

aimed to put matters in such a shape that time would bring the best result. Some of our heaviest creditors were John M. Rhodes & Co., of Sacramento and Shasta; Langton & Co., of Downieville; and E. M. Strange, of Murphy's. In trying to put these debts in course of settlement, I made some arrangement in Downieville with the law firm of Spears & Thornton, to collect, by suit, a certain note of Green & Purdy of \$12,000. Early in April I learned that Spears had collected \$3,700 in money, had appropriated it to his own use, and had pledged another good note taken in part payment of \$3,953. He pretended to be insane. I had to make two visits to Downieville on this business, and there made the acquaintance of Mr. Stewart, now a Senator from Nevada. He was married to a daughter of Gov. Foote; was living in a small frame house on the

bar just below the town, and his little daughter was playing about the door in the sand. Stewart was then a lawyer in Downieville, in good practice; afterward, by some lucky stroke, became part owner of a valuable silver mine in Nevada, and is now accounted a millionaire. I managed to save something out of Spears, and more out of his partner, Thornton. This affair of Spears ruined him, because his insanity was manifestly feigned.

I remained in San Francisco till July 3, when, having collected and remitted every cent that I could raise, and got all the property in the best shape possible, hearing from St. Louis that business had revived, and that there was no need of further sacrifice, I put all the papers, with a full letter of instructions, and power of attorney, in the hands of William Blanding, esq., and took passage on the good steamer Golden Gate, Capt. Whiting, for Panama and home. I reached Lancaster on July 28, 1858, and found all the family well. I was then perfectly unhampered, but the serious and greater question remained, what was I to do to support my family,



HELPING THEIR NEIGHBOR OUT.

consisting of a wife and four children, all accustomed to more than the average comforts of life?

## BECOMES A LAWYER IN KANSAS.

I remained at Lancaster all of August, 1858, during which time I was discussing with Mr. Ewing and others what to do next. Maj. Turner and Mr. Lucas, in St. Louis, were willing to do anything to aid me, but I thought best to keep independent. Mr. Ewing had property at Chaney, consisting of salt wells and coal mines, but for that part of Ohio I had no fancy. Two of his sons, Hugh and T. E. Jr., had established themselves at Leavenworth, Kan., where they and their father had bought a good deal of land, some near the town, and some back in the country. Mr. Ewing offered to confide to me the general management of his share of interest, and Hugh and T. E. Jr. offered me an equal co-partnership in their law firm. Accordingly, about the 1st of September, I started for Kansas, stopping a couple of weeks in St. Louis, and reached Leavenworth. I found, about two miles below the fort, on the river-bank, where in 1851 was a tangled thicket, quite a handsome and thriving city, growing rapidly in rivalry with Kansas City and St. Joseph, Mo. After looking about and consulting with friends, among them my classmate, Maj. Stewart Van Vleet, Quartermaster of the fort, I concluded to accept the proposition of Mr. Ewing, and accordingly the firm of Sherman & Ewing was duly announced, and our services to the public offered as attorneys at law.

We had an office on Main street, between Shawnee and Delaware, on the second floor, over the office of Hampton Denman, esq., Mayor of the city. This building was a mere shell, and our office was reached by a stairway on the outside. Although in the course of my military reading I had studied a few of the ordinary law books, such as Blackstone, Kent, Starkie, etc., I did not presume to be a lawyer; but our agreement was that Thomas Ewing, Jr., a good and thorough lawyer, should manage all business in the courts, while I gave attention to collections, agencies for houses and lands, and such business as my experience in banking had qualified me for. Yet, as my name was embraced in a law firm, it seemed to me proper to take out a license. Accordingly, one day when United States Judge Le Compte was in our office, I mentioned the matter to him. He told me to go down to the clerk of his court, and he would give me the license. I inquired what examination I would have to submit to, and he replied, "None at all;" he would admit me on the ground of general intelligence.

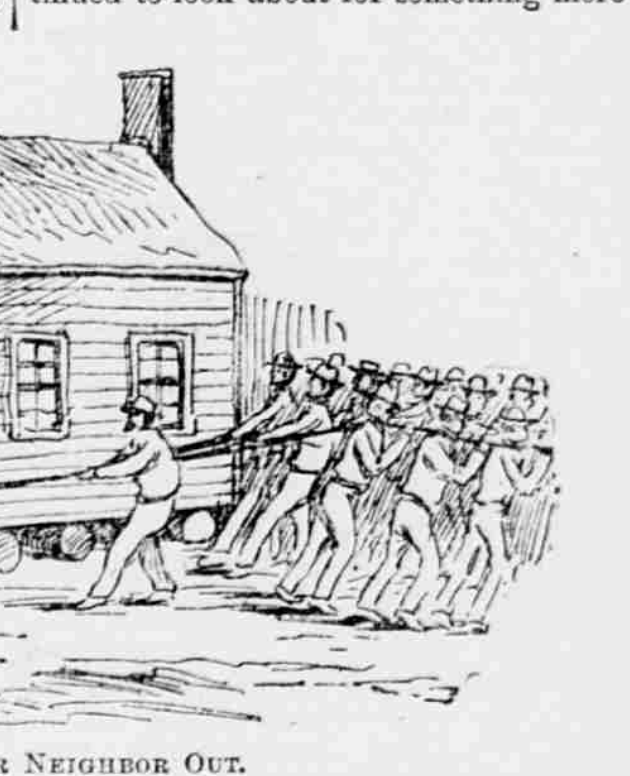
During that summer we got our share of the business of the profession, then represented by several eminent law firms, embracing names that have since flourished in the Senate, and in the higher courts of the country. But

## THE MOST LUCRATIVE SINGLE CASE

was given me by my friend Maj. Van Vleet, who employed me to go to Fort Riley, 136 miles west of Fort Leavenworth, to superintend the repairs to the military road. For this purpose he supplied me with a four-mule ambulance and driver. The country was then sparsely settled, and quite as many Indians were along the road as white people; still, there were embryo towns all along the route, and a few farms sprinkled over the beautiful prairies. On reaching Indianola, near Topeka, I found everybody down with the chills

and fever. My own driver became so shaky that I had to act as driver and cook. But in due season I reconnoitered the road, and made contracts for repairing some bridges, and for cutting such parts of the road as needed it. I then returned to Fort Leavenworth and reported, receiving a fair compensation. On my way up I met Col. Sumner's column returning from their Summer scout on the plains, and spent the night with the officers, among whom were Capt. Sackett, Sturgis, etc. Also at Fort Riley I was cordially received and entertained by some old Army friends, among them Maj. Sedgwick, Capt. Totten, Eli Long, etc.

Mrs. Sherman and children arrived out in November, and we spent the Winter very comfortably in the house of Thos. Ewing, Jr., on the corner of Third and Pottawatomie streets. On the 1st of January, 1859, Daniel McCook, esq., was admitted to membership into our firm, which became Sherman, Ewing & McCook. Our business continued to grow, but as the income hardly sufficed for three such expensive personages, I continued to look about for something more



certain and profitable, and during that Spring undertook for the Hon. Thomas Ewing, of Ohio, to open a farm on a large tract of land he owned on Indian Creek, 40 miles west of Leavenworth, for the benefit of his grandnephew, Henry Clark, and his grandniece, Mrs. Walker. These arrived out in the Spring, by which time I had caused to be erected a small frame dwelling-house, a barn, and fencing for a hundred acres. This helped to pass away time, but afforded little profit; and on the 11th of June, 1859, I wrote to Maj. D. C. Buell, Assistant Adjutant-General, on duty in the War Department with Secretary of War Floyd, inquiring if there was a vacancy among the Army Paymasters, or anything in his line that I could obtain. He replied promptly, and sent me the printed program for a military college about to be organized in Louisiana, and advised me to apply for the Superintendent's place, saying that Gen. G. Mason Graham, the half-brother of my old Commanding General, R. B. Mason, was very influential in this matter, and would doubtless befriend me on account of the relations that had existed between Gen. Mason and myself in California. Accordingly, I addressed a letter of application to the Hon. R. C. Wickliffe, Baton Rouge, La., asking the answer to be sent to me at Lancaster, O., where I proposed to leave my family. But before leaving this branch of the subject, I must

EXPLAIN A LITTLE MATTER of which I have seen an account in print, complimentary or otherwise, of the firm of Sherman, Ewing & McCook, more especially of the senior partner.

One day, as I sat in our office, an Irishman came in and said he had a case and wanted a lawyer. I asked him to sit down and give me the points of his case, all the other members of the firm being out. Our client stated that he had rented a lot of an Irish landlord for \$5 a month; that he had erected thereon a small frame shanty, which was occupied by his family; that he had paid his rent regularly up to a recent period, but to his house he had appended a shed, which extended over a part of an adjoining vacant lot belonging to the same landlord, for which he was charged \$2.50 a month, which he refused to pay. The consequence was that his landlord had for a few months declined even his \$5 monthly rent until the arrears amounted to about \$17, for which he was sued. I told him we would undertake his case, of which I took notes, and a fee of \$5 in advance, and in due order I placed the notes in the hands of McCook, and thought no more of it.

A month or so after our client rushed into the office and said his case had been called at Judge Gardner's (I think), and he wanted his lawyer right away. I sent him up to the Circuit Court, Judge Pettit's, for McCook, but he soon returned, saying he could not find McCook, and accordingly I hurried with him up to Judge Gardner's office, intending to ask a continuance, but I found our antagonist there with his lawyer and witnesses, and Judge Gardner would not grant a continuance, so of necessity I had to act, hoping that at every minute McCook would come. But the trial proceeded regularly to its end; we were beaten, and judgment was entered against our client for the amount claimed and costs. As soon as the matter was explained to McCook, he said "execution" could not be taken

(Continued on second page.)

## A GALLANT RECORD.

Michigan's 5th Cav. in the Latter

Period of the War.

CUSTER ADVANCED.

His Command Becomes First

Brigade of the Cavalry.

HARD FIGHTING.

Gallant Gen. Sedgwick Killed after Forming His Lines.

BY J. K. LOWDEN, NORTHVILLE, MICH.

(Continued from last week.)

WE FOUGHT the way to Racoon Ford, next to Summerville Ford, where the defenses were abandoned, and Gen. Kilpatrick personally authorized Col. Alger to invite his regiment to re-take them. We did it. We held it from 4 o'clock

p. m. until after noon the next day, when the Twelfth Corps relieved us. Later, after other movements, began the retreat of Gen. Meade, when we fought from the fords of Robinson River back to Culpeper and Brandy Station—a terribly contested field. I doubt if it had its equal during the four long and bloody years of the war. Larger battles have been fought, but the chances for seeing over that plain, covering thousands of acres of ground, were never better.

From here to the Rappahannock we crossed and went into camp, only to be called to take the road down the river to the lower fords, 30 miles, and at daylight were on picket to dispute the progress of any for that night by seeking to cross there.

Again we covered the retreat and kept on behind our army until the field of Bull Run was reached. We were assigned several places, and stayed until the tangle was unsnarled, when on Oct. 18 we started toward Gainesville and met the enemy, pressed them back, and



GEN. CUSTER.

encamped. On the morning of the 19th an early start was made, and a fight was on hand at once. Noon found our lines advanced four miles to Broad Run, at Buckland Mills, where we forced a crossing. After dinner we started toward Warrenton and got a flogging, but a part of us escaped. The enemy followed, and met the First Division, First Corps, Gen. J. S. Wadsworth, and the latter did the job we had failed to do.

From Gainesville to where the enemy had driven us we went down to Bristoe Station, but advanced only as the railroad was rebuilt, until the Rappahannock was again crossed. From the Rappahannock aggressive work began. We again went over Fleetwood high ground, and met a determined resistance of the enemy at Stevensburg. They were forced toward Culpeper and by the western base of Pony Mountain, and towards Morton's Ford, where they crossed to the south side of the Rapidan.

We were assigned a grove of old-field pines between Stevensburg and Stony Mountain for a camping ground, where we fixed Winter quarters. Then began a series of picket work. The Morton's Ford fight took place, and we had a hand in that, and on a December day crossed over to Wilderness Tavern. We picketed from Germanna up by Jacob's Ford. On Feb. 28, 1864, Gen. Kilpatrick led off our regiment, 180 picked men, together with similar details from the cavalry force, against the city of Richmond for the release of prisoners that were held there. I can say but very little of the losses sustained, for reports have never come under my notice.

We were changed from the Second Brigade of the Third Division to the First Brigade, First Division, on April 17, 1864. It came about in this way: After Gen. Grant had taken command of all the armies, he called the impetuous and only Sheridan to take the place

then held by Pleasanton as Chief of the Cavalry. A consultation was held in Washington, and Gen. Custer was named and decided upon to take the First Brigade of the Cavalry Corps. Upon advising him of his appointment he asked: "Does that mean that my brigade is also to be advanced? Are they to be the First Brigade of the Cavalry?"

After some hesitation, Grant and Sheridan replied that they had not taken that into consideration. Custer, taking a paper from his pocket, said: "If it means that I am to have my own brigade, the offer is very thankfully accepted; for they have earned for me all I enjoy of military celebrity;



THE BUGLE RANG OUT.

but if not, gentlemen, here is my commission."

Both Generals answered: "Gen. Custer, your Michigan Brigade shall be promoted with you to the head of the cavalry line."

The next day we were taken from the place we had held and placed on the right of the line. Here we were engaged along the upper fords of the Rapidan until May 4, when we broke camp. About April 20, the order came to turn over all our rifles, the other regiments the guns that they had, and all were armed with new Spencer carbines. Through the campaign of 1863 we had carried the rifle; now the carbine was given to us. The 1st had the Sharpe's, the 6th and 7th the Burnside. All gave up the old equipments on the 22d of April, and drew the Spencer. Probably no brigade in the United States service was as well armed.

We crossed the Rapidan on the morning of May 5, at Ely's Ford, and at noon were on picket to Chancellorsville. After an hour's rest, we were placed on the

LINE-OF-BATTLE. On the 6th we held the same ground until nearly dark, when we were hurriedly mounted and taken near Todd's Tavern for a charge; the bugle rang out, but the signal was quickly changed to "Rally on the line!"

The morning of the 7th our fighting began early and desperate. Fitz Lee started us by shelling our line, and he got a beautiful thrashing for it. All day and until after night we were under a hot fire. The 8th we chased down the road to Spottsylvania to take up the line-of-battle.

Here Gen. Sedgwick was killed, just after his corps had formed their line-of-battle in our front. At Silver we went into camp. On the 9th began that long, fatiguing raid of 16 days, with Beaver Dam, where nearly 400 of our men were retaken from their captors, the destruction of the station and the supplies of Lee's army, and a fight on hand that lasted all night, with advantage to the other fellows.

But daylight brought a change, with advantage to us. Now the corps changed front, with Michigan on the skirmish-line. Gen. Gregg's Second Division took the advance; then Wilson's Third Division; then came Merritt's Brigade, temporarily under command of Col. Gibbs; the Second Brigade, with Col. Thomas Devan.

We fell into line and took care of the rear, all day pestered by the enemy, with bushwhackers on our flanks and fences on fire both sides of the road. As soon as convenient we crossed the South Anna River and went into camp.

The 11th brought us into the Yellow



THE OFFICER REELED FROM HIS SADDLE.

Tavern fight, where the chief of the Southern cavalry was mortally wounded by a shot from the line of our regiment, fired by John A. Huff, of E troop. Col. Devan began this fight with the Second Brigade of our division, and sent a courier to Custer for help. Gen. Sheridan had come up and Custer asked for the 1st Vt. The request was granted. "Col. Alger, take you regiment and the